



NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS ALLIANCE MEETING

Salisbury Community Appearance Commission

Thursday, April 29, 2010

4 p.m.

One Water Street

MINUTES

In attendance: Garth Birdsey, Maggie Blackwell, Dorothy Campbell, Ann Coggin, Greta Connor, Suzanne Casey, Kaye Goble, Deborah Harris, Sarah Hawkins, Almeader Holt, Lou Manning, Barbara Perry, Lorrain Reidda, Doug Robinson, Sara Robinson, Bill Safrit, Missy Shives, Barbara Sorel, Jack Thomson and Ken Weaver

City Staff: Chris Branham, Janet Gapen, Diana Moghrabi, and Lynn Raker

Neighborhoods Represented: Brooklyn South Square, City Park, Country Club Hills, Green Hills, Fulton Heights, Milford Hills, Millford Knoll, Meadowbrook, Park Avenue, Sedgefield Acres, West End, and West Square

The meeting began with some refreshment and greeting time. Each person introduced themselves and stated their neighborhood.

HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

Lynn Raker explained where the recommendations to City Council are today regarding this groups' recommendation to create a Housing Commission.

Below is a portion of the PowerPoint Lynn presented.

Timeline

FY 2006-07 Council Outcome #2: Improve neighborhoods and safety for all areas of the city

Dec. 2006: NLA presentation to Council on deteriorated housing

FY 2007-08 Council Outcome #2: Improve neighborhoods and safety for all areas of the City

July 2007: "Better Housing" staff report

FY 2008-09 Council Outcome #2: Improve neighborhoods and safety for all areas of the City

Oct. 2008: Chris Branham hired as new Code Services Manager

FY 2009-10 Council Outcome #2: Improve neighborhoods and safety for all areas of the City

Goal 4: Pursue implementation of the "Better Housing" code

Oct. 2009: NLA subcommittee explores roles of housing commissions/review board

Jan. 2010: CAC goals presentation to Council—Request from NLA for consideration of Housing Commission or Review Board.

FY 2010-11 Council Outcome #2: Improve neighborhoods and safety for all areas of the City

Goal 4: Appoint a task force to pursue implementation of the better housing code and formation of a Housing Commission.

Recommendation: City Housing Commission or Review Board

From the following groups:

- CAC Neighborhood Leaders Alliance
- Better Housing Committee (city staff)
- Historic Neighborhood Alliance

Purpose:

- Support Code Services Division
- Peer group review for housing violations
- Study existing code and make recommendations on minimum housing standards, landlord registration, incentives vs. penalties, etc.
- Study big picture issues and unintended consequences (i.e., do not reduce affordable housing stock)
- Subcommittees to develop community resource data: coordination with Community Development Corporation (CDC), Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), Historic Salisbury Foundation (HSF), Salisbury Police Department (PD), and other agencies.

Composition:

- Recommend approximately nine members
- Diverse representation: landlords, homeowners, neighborhood leaders, renters, real estate/ finance/ mortgage professional
- May be quasi-judicial
- Self-sustaining board (\$\$)
- Proactive

Proposed Timeline:

- Request Council to appoint committee to study proposal (CAC goals presentation in Jan. 2010)
- Appoint board for July 1, 2010 start, with first year dedicated to orientation, study of existing standards and procedures, development of policies & procedures, bylaws, etc.; enabling legislation if necessary
- July 1, 2011 – Board ready to review cases

Several concerns were raised about getting the application information distributed to the public for both the potential task force and for potential housing commission members. What types of skill sets would be desired?

Council member Maggie Blackwell addressed this topic from the City Council perspective. May 6 she will meet with the City Manager and staff to review the budget and council goals. City Council votes on the new budget at the end of May. This possible Housing Commission will most likely fall under the direction of the Community Planning Services Department/Code Services Division.

NEIGHBORHOOD ACCOUNTABILITY

Greta Connor has serious concerns about the number of blighted neighborhoods in Salisbury and asked how to motivate residents to take pride in their neighborhoods. “The City is no better than its worst neighborhood. We have to lift them up.”

Greta would like to see the NLA structure a group to meet with individuals and help them come together in their neighborhood. We have the Internet, the “Did You Know” brochure (in Spanish and English), the “Guide for Neighborhood Associations” and “Adopt-a-Street” as tools to share. It is the hope of the CAC that neighborhood leaders will take information back and share it with their neighbors.

For those who already attend these meetings—her advice is “just do it.” If you have a yard next door to you that needs regular cutting, just cut it. If there is a property that is a nuisance, call Code Services or Salisbury Police. Do not assume that the City knows there is a problem.

Chris Branham, Code Services Manager, is attending Neighborhood Watch meetings, SNAG meetings and others. He has published a brochure for his division, runs information on Access 16 and regularly attends Council meetings. The new department has decade vehicles and employees wear uniforms for a professional appearance.

Chris Branham noted that the City Code and Land Development Ordinance have had to be amended to help give the Code Services Division some strength in their ability to enforce both. A software program specifically for code enforcement, which he has requested, would help make his division more efficient. Chris addressed individual questions and concerns.

WRAP UP

- The West End representatives requested street cleaning and extra effort for Livingstone’s graduation. (A follow-up found that the Streets Division did sweep and wash the area.)
- Continue to work successfully in subcommittees.
- Propose to add an additional NLA meeting between the fall and spring.
- A later meeting time (after regular work hours) might increase attendance.

Maggie Blackwell recommended a subcommittee to brainstorm ideas that will help educate residents of Salisbury and to “take back the block.” The following people signed up to serve on that committee: Barb Sorel, Greta Connor, Barbara Perry, Lynn Raker, Doug Robinson, Sara Robinson, Lou Manning, Dot Campbell, Almeader Holt, Ken Weaver, Lorraine Reidda, and Bill Safrit. Lynn Raker will also ask Christine Wilson and Mimi Howard if they are willing to participate.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

<http://www.salisburync.gov/lm&d/Neighborhoods/Neighborhoods.html>